

Local Authority: Solihull

Young People
<p>Partnership Structures / Sub regional Groupings</p> <p>As a result of joint working between the Local Authority (LA) and the LSC, two Collegiates (North Solihull and South Solihull), have been established. These comprise local partnerships of schools, colleges, and training providers. The Collegiates are managed by Local Area Planning Groups of Head teachers, Principals, and representatives of the LA, LSC, Connexions and Education Business Links. They are supported in this work by a Solihull 14-19 Coordinator and the Solihull Improvement and Advisory Service, including the Adviser with responsibility for 14-19. The 14-19 Strategic Framework provides protocols to ensure collaborative working. The overarching strategic group of all partners is a 14-19 Forum. A number of developments have enabled the Collegiates to form collaborative partnerships in readiness for the introduction of Diplomas. Across Solihull a common day has been established to allow students in schools to access additional courses at the colleges, or other providers, with agreed transport arrangements. Underpinning this is a 14-19 Strategic Framework, a Manual of Good Practice and a Quality Assurance Framework. Work has taken place on a common approach to publicity, recruitment, application and enrolment for these programmes. The Local Area Prospectus is now live.</p> <p>There is post 16 collaboration involving schools and colleges including (1) joint teaching of A Levels between two 11-18 Schools; (2) a newly established school/college International Baccalaureate (IB) programme offer (a national first) along with (3) an existing IB programme at the City Technology College (4) post 16 offers being developed between schools and colleges, with additional school sixth form provision being sought. A number of working groups support these developments: Curriculum Deputies; the Work Related and Alternative Curriculum Group; the Heads of Sixth Form Group, and now the Diploma Development Groups. On the Solihull Grid for Learning website there is now a live 14-19 area to support all aspects of these developments.</p>
<p>Progress Checks Headlines</p> <p>The percentage of young people in Solihull achieving Level 2 by age 19 for 2006-07 was 74.0%. Solihull is higher than the national figure for the same period of 73.9% and improving. There was a rigorous target-setting process conducted in Autumn 2006 which led to targets being set for 5A*-C with and without English and Maths. Review of achievement emphasised those successful strategies in improving 5A*-C including English and Maths. The percentage of 5A*-C with English and Maths for 2007 was 53.0% compared to the England Average of 46.8%. The percentage of 5A*-C was 69.2% for 2007, compared to an England Average of 62.0%.</p> <p>For the past three years KS4 has been a priority for Secondary National Strategy (SNS) consultants, whose role is to support schools in raising standards in core subjects. Core subject monitoring by advisers is currently taking place. Strategy planning for the year ahead prioritises schools according to a range of factors which cover both KS3 and KS4. Schools are prioritised at three levels – intensive, targeted and universal; intervention and catch up have been themes for all these layers for several years. Solihull was part of the Study Plus pilot (4 schools) which focussed on pupils at risk of not achieving English and Maths. Eleven schools are involved, in this second year. Solihull invests heavily in the use of value-added data, and generates question level information. This is used by consultants, advisers and School Improvement Partners (SIPs). Support for intensive and targeted schools is reviewed constantly. It has been commended by HMI in two schools in special measures, and by HMI in their SNS survey of Spring 2006. A recent LA award will support mentoring those pupils estimated at 'D' grade to help them reach a 'C'. The Local Area Agreement is providing funds to establish an alternative curriculum 14-16 project using the SHAW Trust centre centred at Park Hall School but servicing the north school in the deprived area of Chelmsley Wood in order to target young people</p> <p>most likely to become NEET. A coordinator of engagement curriculum offers has been appointed</p> <p>In 2008-09, LSC 14-19 Development Funding has targeted provision to meet specific learner groups. This includes alternative provision to support young people identified as the most challenging and predicted to be potentially NEET from a range of vulnerable learner groups (e.g. Looked After children, Teenage Parents, LLDD, and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children). Each pupil to have a full-time statutory curriculum programme, a work-related programme, key skills learning and a personal and social skills programme. The intended outcomes include improved attendance, reduced exclusions and an improved point score from that predicted before the programme.</p> <p>The LSC, working in partnership with the Local Authority, have identified 14-19 Collegiates as essential</p>

<p>to deliver the 14-19 reform programme that aims to raise the participation of young people in learning beyond 16. Funding will support existing networks with curriculum developments and associated activities. This will include: 14-19 Curriculum Deputies/Vice Principals, 14-19 Engagement Groups/Meetings, 14-19 Alternative Curriculum Groups/Meetings, 14-19 Strategic Reform Groups/Meetings and 14-19 Diploma Groups/Meetings.</p> <p>Funding will contribute to the ongoing maintenance and development of the Birmingham and Solihull Area-Wide Prospectus. Specific areas of development will include implementing Individual Learning Plans and a Common Application Process (CAP).</p>
<p>Academies / Presumptions</p> <p>Solihull MBC is in the first wave of Building Schools for the Future, with four new schools opening from October 2008, hence the capital funding for the accommodation and new infrastructure including ICT will support the new curriculum and be flexible enough to support this diploma line. The following new establishments opened in 2007: an Academy, a Post 16 Centre, and a Multi agency Inclusion Centre.</p>
<p>NEET/ NEET Strategies</p> <p>Connexions reported a 9.5% overall NEET cohort in January 2007 for Birmingham and Solihull. The level of NEET was reduced to 8% in November 2007 and this is within the national target of 9% for NEET. However, the proportion of young people in NEET for Birmingham is one of the highest in the region. The local LSC has formed a NEET development group and works closely with Connexions on joint strategies to tackle NEETs. Current local LSC initiatives. These include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEET provider contracts (value £1.8 M) to ensure successful progression • targeted support through new ESF funds for potential NEET hotspots • £468K has been contracted with a Solihull provider • £614K allocated for a pre-16 NEET contract for work with schools • additional funds of £1.3M tendered to target provision on LLDD learners within NEET, teenage parents and related projects • establishing a LSC NEET action plans • <p>September Guarantee</p> <p>A September Guarantee Action Group has established a work plan for 2008-09. Stakeholders include the LSC, Connexions, and the Local Authority. A co-ordinated approach has been agreed by the NEET strategy group for raising awareness of September Guarantee. Letters have been sent to schools, colleges and WBL providers to ensure maximum return for the first census point for receiving information regarding offers from post 16 providers. Monthly meetings are taking place with Connexions and the LSC to ensure to take appropriate actions where learners who have no offers. The LSC is represented at the Birmingham CAP meetings. Funding has been identified in the 14-19 development funds to contribute to the CAP process and to incorporate a September Guarantee clearing house.</p>
<p>Young Apprenticeships</p> <p>Solihull did not have a cohort 4 YA Programme and does not have a cohort 5 operating in 2008-09.</p>
<p>Schools Engagement Programme</p> <p>The School Engagement Programme (SEP) began at the start of the 2006-07 academic year. It meets LSC priorities around NEET, increased participation, and Level 2 attainment. The SEP programme aims to motivate students through a more work-focused element to the curriculum that will encourage students to progress to learning, further training or employment with training. The programme is aimed at re-engaging young people with barriers to learning. This includes low skills levels to a range of psychological problems or disabilities. The offer is deliberately flexible to reflect the diversity of learner need. In 2007-08, the SEP programme was extended to 15,000 students from 70 programmes around the country. In Solihull 70 places were secured and £87,500 offered to support individuals needs who were identified. Schools are crucial in ensuring the programme is sustainable beyond the initial funding, and to ensure embedding in the KS4 curriculum offer. In 2008-09, as the move towards mainstreaming intensifies; embedding work is continuing with the Local Authority.</p>
<p>Diploma Summary</p> <p>Diploma developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2008 <p>IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2009: <p>Engineering, Creative and Media Society, Health and Development Business, Administration and Finance</p>

Hair and Beauty

Economic Development

The sub-region has a significant number of planned projects. Solihull has benefited from business, commercial and redevelopment activities. There is potential for significant additional demand for labour and skills over the next decade associated with the following activities:-

- Aspire Office Park
- Blythe Valley Business Park
- Birmingham Business Park
- The Green

Planning permission is currently live for the development of HQ, office accommodation and light industrial use. Significant redevelopment in the North of the Borough continues to transform the housing, infrastructure and retail opportunities. The new Asda at Chelmsley Wood Town Centre is under construction, and will lead to employment opportunities being identified. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and voluntary sector are jointly submitting a major application (for 'myplace' government funding administered through the lottery), for the £5M development of a new, multi-functional centre for young people in Chelmsley Wood.

Planned development in Solihull is currently estimated to create up to 9,340 jobs over the next five years across the following sectors/ occupations: Business and Professional Services, ICT and Mixed Office Services.

The LSC, AWM and the Regional Observatory are working together with local areas to develop a consistent skills modelling tool. This tool will help forecast the occupation and levels of predicted new employment opportunities and will inform integrated employment and skills procurement activity. The ability to contract with providers and sufficient capacity to respond to targeted work will be vital to ensure the skill impacts are maximised. Work will need to be undertaken to ensure that providers are linking into work with existing employers and businesses.

Sub-regional:

Workforce Development / Worklessness

The Work based Learning (WBL) Cluster Group is convened monthly to steer the management and development of the Apprenticeships and Entry to Employment (E2E) programme in Birmingham and Solihull. Priorities for 2008/09 include:

- Transition planning for implementation of the National Apprenticeship Service
- Increasing apprenticeship participation and success rates among all learners
- Addressing inequalities in apprenticeship access and participation
- Increasing progression onto apprenticeships or employment with training from E2E and overall to 56%
- Piloting of the Level 1 Pre-Apprenticeship option
- Focussing support on providers with success rates below regional averages
- Mitigating the impact of Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP)
- Utilising the flexibilities in employer responsive funding to enable apprenticeship growth
- Support the development of new frameworks in Birmingham and Solihull
- Support the entry of new providers and build capacity
- Support employers to develop Apprenticeship programmes
- Enabling the WBL Provider Network to support building of capacity among the provider base

The Partnership Team has formed a Train to Gain (TTG) Cluster Group in 2008 to oversee the transfer of contract management from the regional LSC team to the local partnership team. The group meets every two weeks and focuses on the following aspects of the local TTG partnerships:-

- supporting strategies to achieve local growth targets
- analysing performance information, sharing best practice
- effective monitoring processes and disseminating policy and guidance from the regional TTG team and National Office

A local sub- group of providers has been established to look at strategies to increase performance across Birmingham and Solihull. The main FE College TTG partnerships and a training provider have been identified as having the capacity to grow significantly in respect of TTG. The region is leading the field nationally in respect of TTG performance. Additional new and responsive TTG providers have been given contracts in 2008. These are performing well across a range of sectors within the area. However, quality improvement activity and development work to support weaker provision is a priority

area for 2008-09. This will address the three providers delivering under 50%. South Birmingham College followed by JHP are the best local TTG performers currently, with 136% and 116% respectively. Birmingham and Solihull initial TTG allocation for 2008-09 is £39M.

An ESF cluster group has been established. In 2007-08, there has been concentrated effort by the partnership and regional team on ESF project closure. An evaluation of all ESF projects, both Objective 2 and Objective 3 began in July 2008. It is expected that this will be completed and a draft report received in mid October 2008. A review will be undertaken to evaluate the data and impact of the programme that ran from 2000 until 2008. This will include MG Rover, Fair Cities and Equal Projects. There will also be an internal evaluation to consider how the LSC has supported providers and particularly our key client Group of organisations in the community and voluntary sector. The Birmingham and Solihull Area Office are in the process of closing over 150 projects. They cover a wide range of training activities and are spread across colleges, training providers and the voluntary sector. The projects worked with individuals with low skill levels, who had been disengaged in targeted areas.

New Programme 2008 - The total allocated is £11,751,126.

In Birmingham and Solihull under the new programme under Phase 1a and 1b there are a total of 17 projects. This provision is currently in the process of being contracted, although with the introduction of greater flexibilities around Train to Gain it is unlikely that all of the projects will go ahead.

The local partnership team has formed a Skills for Life (SfL) cluster group. The group meets every month to focus on activities relating to SfL, OLASS and Adult Safeguarded Learning. Birmingham & Solihull Measures of Success for SfL:-

1. Provide pre-employability and SfL provision for workless clients through bespoke training focused on employers needs.
Success Measure – Birmingham & Solihull city strategy targets in priority wards
2. Success Measures – Skills for Life identified at appropriate volumes and level within LSC contracted OLASS, ESF, Employability Skills Programme and TTG.
3. Successful delivery of Skills for Life in appropriate ways through ESF contracts

Birmingham and Solihull LSC has recently formed a local LLDD Forum. This is a new operational group that involves partners and stakeholders including the Local Authority, Colleges and Work-Based Learning Providers. The group is focused on four main areas of work which include transitional arrangements for learners, workforce development; specialist provision and the LSC Additional Learner Support (ALS) funding allocation. The local LSC has been successful in obtaining three LLDD Development Fund Bids that total £510K for 2008-09.

The Regional Data Team has undertaken analysis on ALS spend within the region. A paper is being presented on this to the Regional ALS Group in October 2008. The findings will inform partnership team discussions with Colleges and providers. Birmingham and Solihull LSC are currently tendering for Post 16 NEET activity with a total funding contract value of £1.4M. The specification focuses on the “hardest to help with mid to moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities” that have been identified through a full initial/diagnostic assessment. It is currently estimated from Connexions data that around 346 NEET young people have LLDD needs

Worklessness / Integrated Employment and Skills. The difference between the three wards in the north of the Borough and the more affluent wards in the south is one of the widest in the UK. Smith's Wood, Chelmsley Wood and Kingshurst and Fordbridge rank in the 10% most deprived in the country. However, the area does not benefit from renewal funding such as Working Neighbourhood funds, due to the overall borough average. The unemployment rate in the Borough is 2.1%; yet the low rate of 1.4% in the south masks a 5.6% average in the north of the borough, with Smith's Wood demonstrating 7.1% (June 2008), and Chelmsley Wood 6.5%.

City Strategy provision currently provides engagement and ongoing support for 736 long-term unemployed people through Deprived Area Funding and 315 through ESF. Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities funds more in-depth engagement of 38 people furthest from the labour market. Solihull MBC is now an ERDF package owner, (£11M), and a number of projects are under development. The Access to Employment Group is developing a bundle of skills related measures, including Skills Champions, Pathways to construction and a Volunteering Hub. The Access to Employment Group is well supported and very active, with a good website which also hosts the recently launched information packs for front line workers addressing worklessness. An AEG marketing group is taking forward this agenda.

Third Sector. The third sector in the borough is catching up rapidly after several years of under-development. The new Change-up funded SUSTAIN consortium, contracted through Colebridge Trust, has galvanised the sector with an impressive success rate in applying for external funding. It has developed innovative approaches to working with specific groups of 'hardest to reach' clients in the community. NLDC funding is being used to fund client engagement of 38 additional economically inactive through the third sector organisations, working with individuals furthest from the labour market. Innovative approaches to widening digital inclusion are being piloted through a partnership across

Solihull Community Housing and the SUSTAiN consortium, supplying IT hardware, broadband access and IT skills delivery and support to 50 most disadvantaged families or individuals, including those in tower blocks, families of children under-achieving at school, and residents with disability.

Neighbourhood and Community. In 2008, Solihull commissioned a consultancy service (Versa Consultants) to lead a review of Solihull Lifelong Learning Partnership and Adult and Community Learning in Solihull. The research report is being used by Solihull MBC to create a Strategic Plan and a Commissioning Framework for the future. Aligned to this, as part of PCDL reform, Solihull MBC is reviewing the representation on the former Lifelong Learning Partnership to form Partnerships to plan and fund PCDL.

Solihull was recently successful in being awarded £65,550 Family Learning Impact Funding (FLIF) made available to create an impact in areas of disadvantage. The Six strands of development and delivery have been agreed with DIUS and DCSF supported by the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) that seek to enhance and expand existing provision.

Quality

The local partnership team has formed a **Business and Quality Cluster Group** that has created a local interface for quality improvement. Processes have been established between the LSC Regional Quality Forum and this group to effectively monitor provider performance and advise on quality improvement services. The group acts as a point of reference for information, advice and sources of support on quality functions including Notices To Improve (NTI), Ofsted and Inspection, Minimum Levels of Performance (MLP), Framework for Excellence (FFE) and Support and Challenge. From June 2008, Version 1 of the Framework applies to all FE, tertiary, sixth form, agricultural and horticultural, and art and design colleges, and to private training providers that deliver Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and other LSC employer responsiveness-funded provision.

Inspection – FE

No colleges in Solihull were inspected in the last year between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2008.

WBL Inspection

From 1st April 2007 under new Ofsted, there has been one WBL inspection judged overall inadequate, a re-inspection is scheduled for October 2008. In addition to this, one ACL provider has been inspected and was judged overall Good. Nationally throughout the second Ofsted Inspection Cycle there has been an improving trend for WBL.

Minimum Levels of Performance – FE

One college in Solihull has been identified as being at risk of a Notice to Improve for long course provision.

Minimum Levels of Performance - WBL

MLP for the period 2007/08 will be expanded to include Train to Gain provision.

The Training and Quality Standards (TQS) Award will be one measure enabling providers to improve the quality of provision and increase the delivery capacity of apprenticeship provision. LSIS (QIA) continue to offer a wide range of support for providers offering practical advice for self assessment and employer engagement.

A sector analysis of provision falling below the 45% MLP threshold for apprenticeship frameworks in 2006/07 was undertaken against the related volumes of learners. This identified 7 key sectors in Birmingham & Solihull and 406 associated learners including Hospitality and Catering, Construction, Dental Nursing, Health & Social Care, Hairdressing, Customer Services and Children's Care learning and development.

Equality and Diversity sits within a partnership team cluster group. The local LSC was also a pilot for the DIUS (Ministerial Delivery Unit) BME research project. This was commissioned following the Worldclass Apprenticeship Report. Publication of the full report for D. Lammy is currently awaited. This initiative illustrates the local area commitment to tackling increased participation from non-traditional entry and BME groups.